



Making zines for nature

Zines are DIY or self-published magazines or publications – often used to communicate a message, tell a story or inform others on a specific topic. Delivering this zine-making activity will encourage learners to tell their Nature Park journey, share their observations and experiences, or encourage others to take action. Zines can be a simple, creative way to break down and communicate complex issues and facilitate discussion, providing children and young people with a chance to share what matters to them – you don't have to be a writer or artist to make a zine!

Why not use this activity as a starting point to bring together the things you have collectively discovered and learned so far throughout the Nature Park programme? Zines can be a great reflective and evaluative tool for learners, as well as demonstrating how small actions can add up to create a big difference. This activity plan will provide some guidance for facilitating a session, different ways to make a zine, and how to share them with others.

Teaching time

1 hour+

Learning outcomes

- Understand and implement different modes of communication to share ideas, different views and findings to a chosen audience
- Convey a message using structure, examples, facts and visuals effectively to a chosen audience

Before you start

It may be helpful to gather outcomes or findings from other Nature Park activities that learners have engaged with, to help create a group reflection and provide inspiration for what could make up their zine. Some ideas are provided below:

- Written content: [Write a vision statement](#), [Write a poem](#), [Points of view](#), [Storytelling template](#)
- Visual content: [Hidden Nature Challenge](#) (can you print out photographs that learners have taken?), [Creative responses to a place](#), [Design a plant](#)

Step by step

Present the 'Making zines for nature' PowerPoint. This introduces what zines are, why they matter, and some tips and prompts to get started, with various opportunities for discussion throughout. When you reach slide 6, you will be invited to create a reflection on your Nature Park journey so far...

Discuss the questions on slide 6 as a group – take a look at your Nature Park findings and activity outcomes so far as a reminder of where you are. You could create a shared reflection on a whiteboard, flipchart or using sticky notes. This can form a helpful starting point for learners to refer back to when thinking of ideas for their zine.

Green Skills



Suitable for

Key Stage 3
Key Stage 4

Location

Indoors

Season

Spring
Summer
Autumn
Winter

What you'll need

Paper – A4-A3 white paper, coloured paper, recycled scraps or offcuts

Magazines, leaflets and newspapers for collaging – can you gather any garden or nature-focused magazines or catalogues?

Craft materials and tools: pens and pencils, glue sticks and/or tape, scissors, rulers, stapler

Outcomes from other Nature Park activities to inspire the content of your zines

Optional: natural materials from your site – e.g. leaves or flowers found on the ground can be pressed or dried

Optional: computers if you wish to design your zines digitally

Optional: whiteboard, flipchart or sticky notes for reflection

Key vocabulary

Reflection
Message
Audience

Support and extension opportunities

After discussing what the group would like to do with their zines, can learners organise themselves to make this happen? This is an opportunity to strengthen teamwork – which is great practice for your Nature Park!



Step by step (continued)

Slide 10 provides six areas for learners to consider to structure and frame their zine. These questions are modelled on The Message Box, a science communication tool created by COMPASS. (You can find more information on the Message Box format [here](#)) Encourage learners to write down or discuss their answers to these questions to provide a starting point for their zine.

It is up to you and your learners how you'd like to make your zines. They could be made individually, in pairs or small groups – or you could create a collective zine as a class by each creating one page before combining them together.

Think about and discuss different formats and styles. Here are three simple ways to make a zine (which are also introduced in the last slide of the PowerPoint):

- Pamphlet (several sheets of paper folded in half to create the pages, stapled or stitched together)
- One-page zine (created from just a single sheet of paper – print out and use our [one-page zine template](#) as a how-to)
- Accordion (made by folding one sheet of paper back and forth, until it looks like an accordion)

Encourage learners to think about different materials, sizes and folding – how many different ways can you fold a sheet of paper? Looking at your audience and the message you are trying to communicate, how might these influence how you format or make your zine?

If you have access to computers and appropriate software, learners could layout and create their zines digitally before printing them out.

What shall we do next? Discuss with learners what they'd like to do with their zines. How could you share what you've made with others? Remind learners of the audience they've made their zine for – how could they reach them? Some ideas below:

- Swap zines and read each other's (this could be in pairs, or could you swap with another class that have also made zines?)
- Make a display somewhere in your classroom or a communal area – an easy way to do this would be a string or washing line and pegs, or create a Nature Park reading corner along with other relevant books and stories
- Make a zine library at school – is there an area of your school library that could become dedicated to zines?
- Hold a zine fair to raise money and awareness of your Nature Park journey
- Photocopy or scan in your zines to distribute within your local community

Reflection

The Nature Park guide on [capturing impact](#) provides a selection of ways to encourage reflection and evaluation with children and young people. The [KWHL template](#) and [Big Ideas, Little Ideas worksheet](#) can be used to allow learners to form their own personal reflections on the session, what they have found out and what they'd like to do next.



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